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Bishop Tutu's ascendancy

When Bishop Desmond M. Tutu, head of the South African Council of Churches, won the Nobel Peace Prize last year, he was catapulted into position as perhaps the leading political spokesman and representative to the world media and public opinion for South Africa's urban black population.

In February, Bishop Tutu's position was further enhanced when he was named Anglican Bishop of Johannesburg. (In South Africa, the Anglican Church is predominantly black).

As leader of the richest Anglican diocese in South Africa, and having to answer to no higher religious authority in South Africa, the bishop has far more freedom of action in this position than he had as SACC general secretary. During his three two-year terms of leading the SACC, an organization of Protestant denominations with a combined membership of about 10 million, 80 percent of whom are black, Bishop Tutu's organization was racked with controversy.

In large part, it stemmed from his use of the SACC as a platform from which to campaign against President Botha's plan for a slow and carefully paced opening of the political system to all South African population groups — a plan the government in Pretoria says is intended to ease social stress and prevent such abuses as block-voting by tribal chiefs.

Bishop Tutu's prominence is the result of his years of work not in parishional duties, but as an administrator, organizer, and political opponent of South Africa's apartheid system of racial separation. Black South African commentators such as Percy Qoboza and others agree that part of Bishop Tutu's rise is due to the fact that he is acceptable to the political action fronts of South Africa's two main revolutionary movements, the African National Council and the much smaller Pan-Africanist Council of Azania (PAC).

Recently a prominent Republican member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee stated that he "knew nothing about ANC." Yet the U.S. senators and congressmen who have suppported sanctions long-demanded by ANC and its U.S. supporters such as TransAfrica, the Institute for Policy Studies, Washington Office on Africa, and American Committee on Africa, practically speaking, also have been aiding the ANC cause.

The United Democratic Front, formed in 1982, is generally recognized as the internal arm of the Soviet-supported African National Congress. During the 1930s and 1940s, the multiracial South African Communist Party successfully penetrated the ANC leadership and structure, and became the dominant political tendency in the organization. During the early 1950s, the Communists launched a long-term campaign through ANC to bring about installation of a Communist-dominated system in South Africa.

First, there were mass protests and civil disobedience. In the early 1960s, the SACP decided that conditions were ripe to launch terrorist operations as the opening stage for armed insurrection. The SACP and the ANC jointly established a terrorist cadre, *Umkhonto We Sizwe*, — "Spear of the Nation" in the Zulu language. *Umkhonto*'s bombs were aimed at South Africa's civilians, of course: terrorists always attack civilians first in hopes of causing them to lose confidence in their government's ability to defend them.

Umkhonto's leader was Nelson Mandela of the ANC, who was entirely acceptable to the SACP leaders and worked intimately with them, though he himself was not a party member. However, an intriguing document in Mr. Mandela's handwriting was found at the time of his arrest — one which he never repudiated. It was entitled *How to be a Good Communist*. Mr. Mandela's old comrade Joe Slovo still heads the special operations unit of the ANC/*Umkhonto We Sizwe* terrorists. He is a Lithuanian-born former Johannesburg lawyer who serves in the ANC Revolutionary Committee and National Executive.

Mr. Slovo also is a member of the SACP Politburo; and South African authorities, after capturing a Soviet "illegal" who entered South Africa to monitor the effectiveness of car bombings, assassinations, and other terrorist operations carried out by Mr. Slovo's teams, said that Mr. Slovo was a high-ranking officer of the Soviet KGB.

Following the 1976 Soweto riots, ANC received many ultra-militant student recruits from the Black Consciousness Movement. Witnesses before Sen. Jeremiah Denton's Subcommittee on Security and Terrorism described in detail their training in Angola and in the Soviet Union at the hands of Cuban, Russian, and other Soviet bloc personnel. Some of the younger "black militants" have objected to the dominant influence of white Communists in ANC. Expulsions and assassinations have awaited ambitious militant leaders who would not accept ANC discipline.

This is the terrorist organization that is financially supported by the World Council of Churches; and this is the organization to which Bishop Desmond Tutu is "acceptable."

ANC's violence-oriented militant rivals are to be found in the National Forum. This grouping envelops veterans of the Pan-Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC) (a terrorist splinter from the ANC that looked to Mao's China for its international support), and philosophical descendants of the late Steve Biko's Black Consciousness Movement, such as the South African Students Committee and Azanian People's Organization (AZAPO).

The political split between the "liberation movements" also has ethnic or tribal echoes in the long-standing rivalries between Zulus- and Xhosa-speakers. European and American activists rarely comprehend the intense degree to which South Africa's black majority is factionalized on political and ethnic grounds.

Bishop Tutu, who for five years was general secretary of the South African Council of Churches, regularly has been invited to address meetings of both Front and Forum. His message: the need for black unity and to end fratricidal violence so that all energies can be focused on bringing down the apartheid system.

Bishop Tutu's sponsors and his audience have as much been external to South Africa as internal. His primary sponsors have been the Geneva-based Protestant ecumeni-